

*War Appropriation*

long to have blood donors at the hospital who will give a transfusion and thus probably save his life.

With reference to typhoid and tetanus I believe the troops are being given inoculation and preventive injections which will fortify them against these diseases.

I make these suggestions to the department because I think these men are entitled to the very best service which can possibly be given them. If they were in civilian life they could of their own free will go and have these services, or if they were being brought up in ordinary family life they would likely be provided with them by their parents or at the schools which they attend.

With reference to the men in the medical services I think some of the reasons why they are not generally regarded as of the same standard as in civil medical work is the fact that there is not the allowance made for them to express their own individuality; the regulations are not flexible enough with regard to letting a man use his own judgment in a number of cases.

There is bound to be in this country a shortage of medical men. The government has recognized that by the policy it has adopted of assisting young men who are studying medicine to secure their education. The government is to be commended for its foresight and good judgment in adopting that policy. They recognize that there is likely to be a shortage. I suggest that that shortage in some instances could be overcome by utilizing the services of women both as X-ray technicians and as workers in laboratories. There are many women who have taken courses in these lines of medical service, and they could supplant a number of medical doctors who are urgently needed for other lines of work.

I respectfully bring these suggestions to the minister's attention, not that I expect an answer from him now, but that he may pass them on to his permanent medical staff for their consideration. What I am interested in is by no means an attack on persons, but rather upon system and policy. I think the policy with reference to the medical services in all our forces can be brought up to date and assurance given to the men in all the services and to their people that they will get the very best medical and surgical attention it is possible to give them.

Mr. RALSTON: I want to thank the hon. member for Renfrew South (Mr. McCann) for his very constructive comments in connection with the medical services of the department. As he anticipates, I do not feel capable of following him in the various technical

[Mr. McCann.]

matters that he has brought up. Dealing first with his suggestion with regard to the Wassermann test, as he knows the subcommittee of the war expenditures committee made a recommendation regarding that matter about the end of last year. All I can say is that there does seem to be some difference of opinion among technical men about the adoption of it as a routine matter. I myself have had a number of discussions about it, and the adjutant general is I know, taking it up again. A report at this time would have to indicate that the test had not been adopted as routine in connection with the medical services for certain reasons which were given before the special committee last spring when the officers of the medical services were before them, but it is again receiving active consideration from the officers of the department. I am not sure whether my hon. friend was a member of that committee.

With regard to diphtheria treatment I did not notice anything in the report. I do not think that matter was discussed before the committee to which I refer; at least no report was made on it, but I have noted what my hon. friend said.

With regard to the typing of blood, even to a layman it sounds like absolute common sense that a man's blood should be typed at a time when it is easy to do it, and the simple matter of having it registered on his identification disc seems to make a complete chain of procedure in any case of emergency.

The point about the distribution of medical men has of course been forcibly brought home to me in connection with the proposals put forward for the assistance of medical students. It was then one came to realize just what my hon. friend says, that at least there are not going to be too many medical men in Canada, and probably there is going to be a shortage. The matter of distribution has received and is receiving attention, or perhaps I should say the matter of redistribution, as far as the medical services themselves are concerned. We realize that we can increase the supply of medical men not only by getting more into the service but by perhaps readjusting the services and duties of those we have, and that is being done.

At the same time we have in mind some plans with regard to helping to solve the problem which my hon. friend mentions, namely the problem which faces a great many medical men as to where their duty really lies and where they can be of greatest service to the community. In view of the fact that the directorate of national selective service has been set up, I have taken the position—I think this is the first time I have stated it